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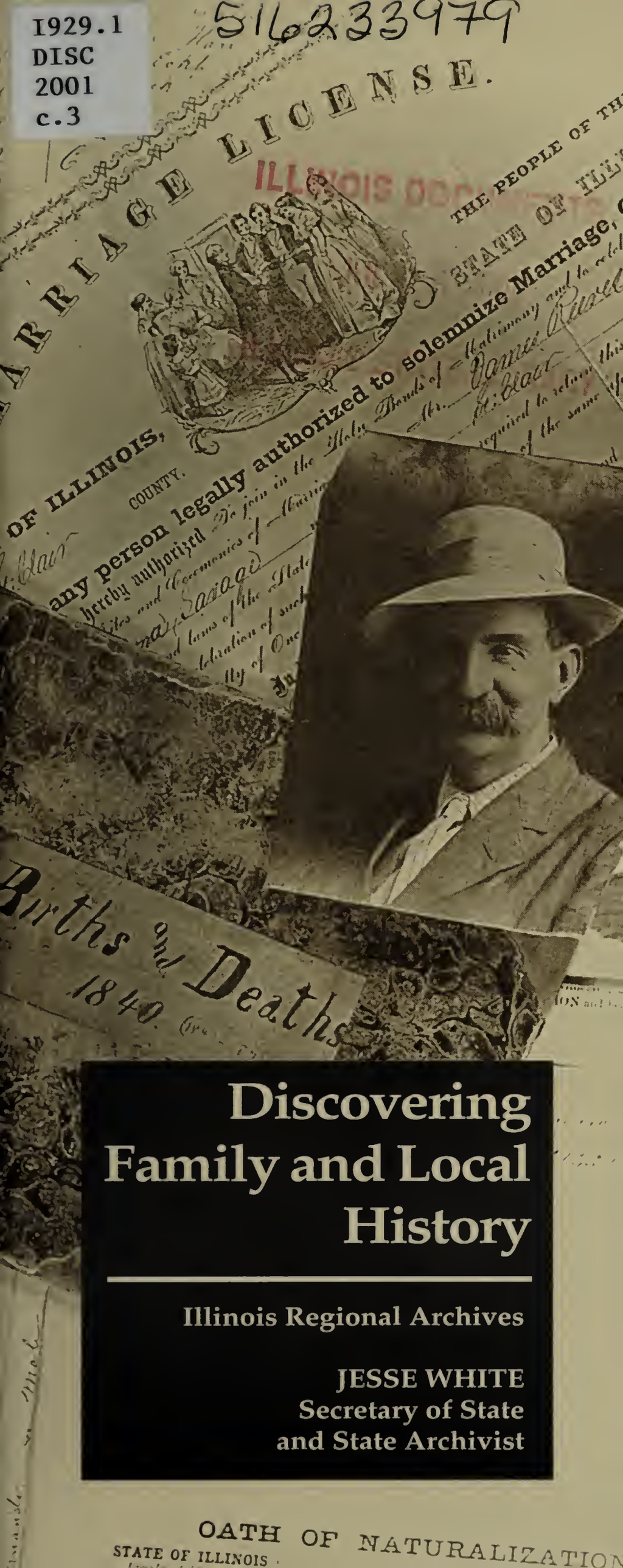

Discovering Family and Local History

Illinois Regional Archives

JESSE WHITE
Secretary of State
and State Archivist

Preserving our past for the future

Looking back into our past is an enriching experience. To ensure that future generations have the same opportunities to explore their heritage, the Illinois Regional Archives Depository system (IRAD) was established.

IRAD is a resource-sharing system that works with the Local Records Commission and area officials to transfer valuable records to the seven IRAD centers at Illinois state universities. Records at each IRAD center reflect the unique history and traditions of that region. The relocation of local records to regional facilities makes the records more accessible to researchers and prevents their loss or physical deterioration.

These records are of great help to historians, genealogists and local government officials, but you don't have to be an expert to find the information you're looking for. IRAD and State Archives staff can help you find whatever you need to reach back through time and discover the richness of the past.

Jesse White

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Secretary of State
and State Archivist

What records does IRAD have?

Local governments that have transferred records to regional depositories include counties, townships, municipalities and school districts. Types of records include:

- county board proceedings files and meeting minutes
- records of births, deaths and marriages
- land deeds, mortgages and tax sale records
- assessors' and collectors' tax books
- poll books and voter registers
- naturalization records, including declarations of intent
- probate records, including wills and will records, case files, administrators' and executors' records, guardianship records, and inventory and appraisement records
- court case files (civil and criminal), chancery cases (including divorces), docket books and court proceedings, and insanity proceedings files and records
- coroners' inquest records and inquest files
- miscellaneous county records, including almshouse/county home records and jail registers
- township meeting minutes
- highway commissioners' minutes
- school trustees' minutes
- pupil registers
- school land sale records
- city council proceedings files and meeting minutes
- ordinance records
- city election records

City of Chicago Records. A special part of IRAD's holdings is from the City of Chicago and includes nearly 35,000 previously unknown documents that predate the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. In addition to city council proceedings files from 1833 to 1942, holdings include plats, atlases and Sanborn Maps.

Other Chicago records include election registers from 1888 to 1892 and ordinance records spanning from 1837 to 1916.

When is IRAD open?

IRAD locations are open to the public daily between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., although hours may vary among the seven depositories. All depositories are closed on Saturdays and Sundays, state holidays and other weekdays the university libraries are closed. Calling the depository before your visit is recommended.

How do I make a request?

IRAD welcomes your mail and telephone requests concerning genealogy and local history. Please include this information in your request:

- full name of the person you are researching
- approximate year the person is expected to appear in a record
- name of the county
- record title or type to search

Please limit inquiries to two names at a time and wait until you have received a response to your first request before submitting additional ones. (See map and addresses on back.)

ILLINOIS STATE LIBRARY
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How do I find what I need?

Several research aids are available:

Publications

- *A Summary Guide to Local Governmental Records in the Illinois Regional Archives*, Second Edition (1999), lists all county, township and municipal records, including those from Chicago and Cook County. Cost: $6.
- *Chicago City Council Proceedings Files: 1833-1871: An Inventory and an Index* is a 989-page inventory accompanied by an index containing 93 microfiche. Cost: $35.

County listings

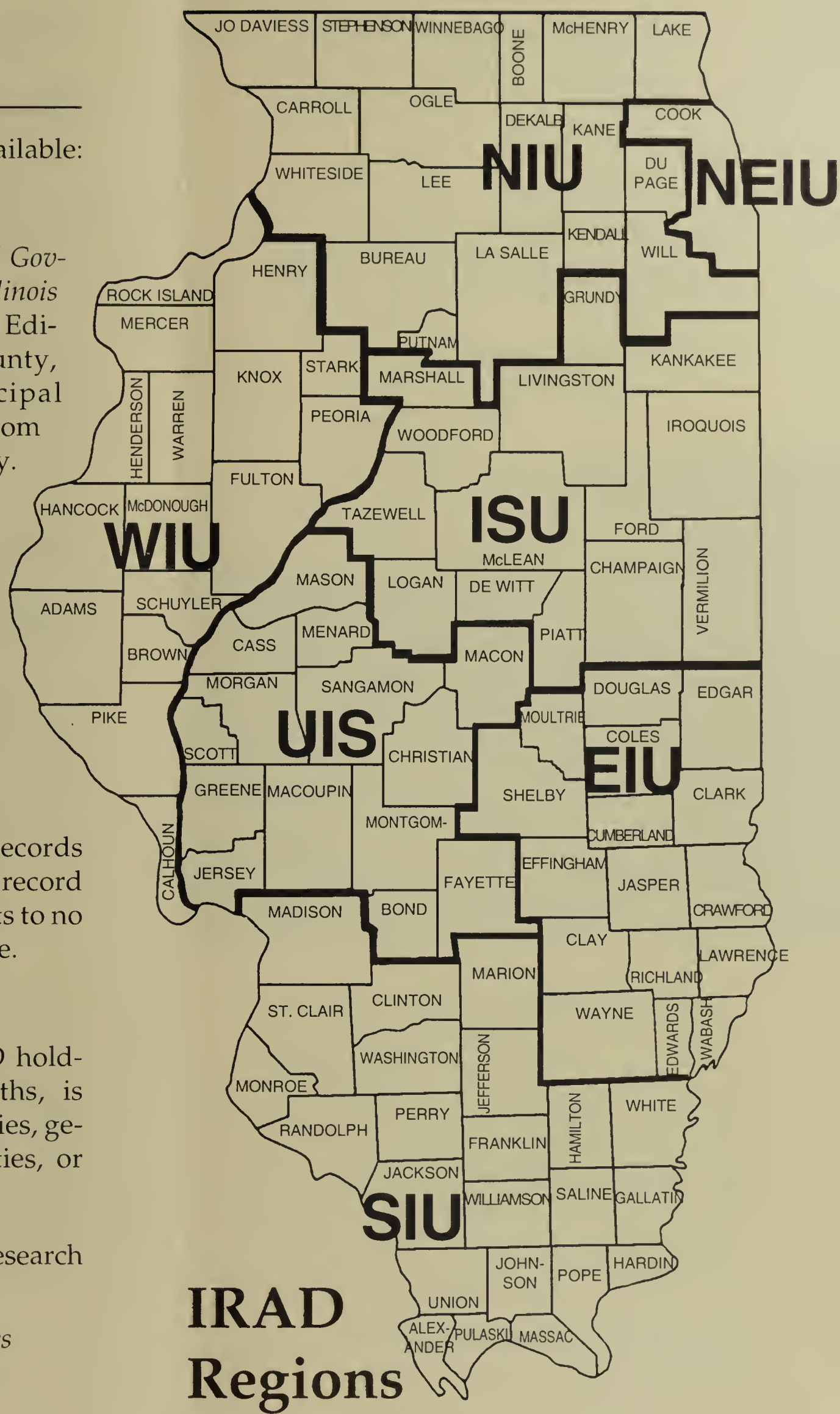
Computer listings of IRAD records arranged by county, office and record title are free. Please limit requests to no more than five counties at a time.

Microfiche listings

A complete listing of IRAD holdings, updated every 12–18 months, is available on microfiche to libraries, genealogical and historical societies, or other such organizations.

Inquiries or orders for these research aids should be sent to:

IRAD, Illinois State Archives
Norton Building
Springfield, IL 62756
(217) 785-1266



IRAD Regions

How do I contact a depository?

IRAD—Booth Library
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
(217) 581-6093

IRAD—Williams Hall
Illinois State University
Campus Box 5500
Normal, IL 61790-5500
(309) 452-6027

IRAD—Regional History Center
Swen Parson Hall
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
(815) 753-1807

IRAD—LIB-144
University of Illinois at Springfield
P.O. Box 19243
Springfield, IL 62794-9243
(217) 206-6520

IRAD—c/o Special Collections
Morris Library-6632
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, IL 62901
(618) 453-3040

IRAD—Ronald Williams Library
Northeastern Illinois University
5500 N. St. Louis Ave.
Chicago, IL 60625-4699
(773) 442-4506

IRAD—University Library
Western Illinois University
1 University Circle
Macomb, IL 61455-1390
(309) 298-2716

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